

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OIC-02
COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-09 OES-07
(ISO) W

-----062282 201605Z /47/43

R 161815Z MAR 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0063
SECDEF WASHDC
CNO WASHDC
INFO CHNAVMAT WASHDC
COMNAVAIRSYSCOM WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 02759

SECSTATE FOR EUR/RPM. SECDEF FOR OUSDR&E/IP AND OASD/ISA.
CNO FOR OP-098/098F/981E/095/951/601D. CHNAVMAT FOR MAT-03

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON, NATO, MILI
SUBJECT: NATO MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT

SUMMARY: THIS IS A REPORT OF THE RECENT NATO MARITIME
PATROL AIRCRAFT STEERING COMMITTEE AND MISSION COMMENTS
REGARDING FUTURE U.S. PARTICIPATION. THE MOST RECENT
MEETING OF THE NATO MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT (NMPA) STEER-
ING COMMITTEE WAS HELD 9 FEBRUARY 1978. AS IN THE PAST,
THE AGENDA AND DISCUSSION WERE OF LITTLE INTEREST TO THE
U.S. THE U.S. HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE NMPA STEER-
ING COMMITTEE, BUT MAKES NO INPUT NOR HAS ANY OTHER DIRECT
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROJECT. ONLY ONE ITEM -- PLANNING
FOR THE NMPA REPLACEMENT -- MAY BE OF FUTURE INTEREST TO
THE U.S., AND COULD BE MORE APPROPRIATELY HANDLED ON A
BILATERAL BASIS WITH FRANCE AND/OR GERMANY. WE RECOMMEND
THAT THE U.S. WITHDRAW FROM THE NMPA STEERING COMMITTEE.
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END SUMMARY.

1. BELGIUM, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS AND
THE UNITED STATES SENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE 9 FEBRUARY
1978 MEETING OF THE NATO MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT (NMPA)
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AT NATO HEADQUARTERS, BRUSSELS,
BELGIUM. A MISSION OFFICER REPRESENTED THE UNITED STATES.

2. THE AGENDA AND DISCUSSION WERE MUNDANE. THE GROUP ONLY REFERRED TO THE U.S. TWICE DURING DISCUSSION OF SONOBUOYS AND REPLACEMENT PARTS WHERE U.S. CONTRACTORS WERE THE SOURCE.

3. THE ONLY ACTION ITEM IS TO DETERMINE IF THE U.S. CAN PROVIDE A REPLACEMENT FOR THE INCUMBENT (ITALIAN) SECRETARY FOR THE NMPA EXECUTIVE AGENCY (CIGMA).

4. THE NEXT NMPA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE HELD 11 MAY 1978 AT NATO HEADQUARTERS, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM.

5. COMMENT: SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE NMPA STEERING COMMITTEE, THE U.S. HAS BEEN A MEMBER. FOR AT LEAST THE LAST EIGHT YEARS THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HAS BEEN A MISSION OFFICER. DURING THIS PERIOD, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE OR NO INFORMATION OF INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES. THE PURPOSE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE IS TO REMAIN COGNIZANT OF THE PROGRAM PROGRESS, MAKE LOGISTIC AND CONFIGURATION CHANGE DECISIONS, AND OBTAIN NATIONAL RESOLUTION OF ANY PROBLEMS ARISING THEREFROM. SINCE THE U.S. DOES NOT OWN OR PRODUCE THE ATLANTIC AIRCRAFT, THESE COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS DO NOT RELATE DIRECTLY TO THE U.S. THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HAS ALWAYS BEEN WELCOME AT MEETINGS, BUT SINCE HE PLAYS A RELATIVELY PASSIVE PART, HE HAS NEVER BEEN MISSED WHEN ABSENT.

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6. THE ONLY AREA IN WHICH THE U.S. MIGHT BE INTERESTED IS THE MODERNIZATION AND NEW GENERATION PROGRAMS, WHERE WE MAY WANT TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE FUTURE NMPA PLANNING. FRANCE IS IN THE PROJECT DEFINITION PHASE OF A NEW GENERATION NMPA, USING THE ORIGINAL AIRFRAME AND ENGINES, BUT NEW AVIONICS. GERMANY WILL UPGRADE THEIR AIRCRAFT TO A LESSER DEGREE HOPEFULLY COMPLETING MODERNIZATION BY 1982.

7. ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE SOME POSSIBILITY OF U.S. EQUIPMENT BEING USED IN THE GERMAN MODERNIZATION, THE FRENCH APPROACH PROBABLY PROVIDES THE BETTER OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S. INDUSTRIAL PARTICIPATION. ANY U.S. PARTICIPATION AT THIS STAGE CAN PROBABLY BE MORE EASILY FACILITATED IN BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS THAN IN THE NATO STEERING COMMITTEE FORUM.

8. U.S. PRESENCE AT NMPA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS DOES PROVIDE ONE MORE INDICATION OF PARTICIPATION AND INTEREST IN NATO MATTERS. HOWEVER, ANY POSSIBLE FUTURE U.S. PARTICIPATION AS A SOURCE OF EQUIPMENT DOES NOT ENHANCE OUR

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
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DOTE-00 EB-08 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-09 OES-07 OIC-02
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R 161815Z MAR 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0064
SECDEF WASHDC
CNO WASHDC
INFO CHNAVMAT WASHDC
COMNAVAIRSYSCOM WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 USNATO 02759

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE "TWO-WAY" STREET CONCEPT. ALSO,
SINCE COMPARABLE U.S. EQUIPMENT UNDER DEVELOPMENT (P-3C
UPDATE III) IS WELL ADVANCED, COMPARED TO ANY POSSIBLE
MODERNIZED OR NEXT GENERATION ATLANTIC AIRCRAFT, U.S.-
SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT WOULD NOT ENHANCE STANDARDIZATION, NOR
PROBABLY INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN TRANS-ATLANTIC OR CROSS-
CHANNEL AIRCRAFT. END COMMENT.

9. DUE TO THE REASONS GIVEN IN PARAGRAPHS 5, 7 AND 8, WE
RECOMMEND THAT THE U.S. OFFICIALLY WITHDRAW FROM THE NATO
MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT STEERING COMMITTEE AND PURSUE THE
SUBJECT OF FUTURE NMPA PLANNING ON A BILATERAL BASIS.
ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE. BENNETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT, COMMITTEES, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO02759
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780122-0957
Format: TEL
From: USNATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780357/aaaabwpj.tel
Line Count: 155
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: 54a917c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3298733
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT SUMMARY: THIS IS A REPORT OF THE RECENT NATO MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT STEERING COMMITTEE AND MISSION COM
TAGS: OCON, MILI, US, NATO
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/54a917c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014